

## SENATE THIRD READING

SB 162 (Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review)

As Amended September 8, 2025

Majority vote. Budget Bill Appropriation Takes Effect Immediately

**SUMMARY**

This Labor trailer bill contains the necessary changes to implement provisions adopted as part of the Budget Act of 2025.

**Major Provisions**

Makes local elections held on November 4, 2025, subject to the same deadlines as the statewide special election held on that date. Allows Santa Clara County to adopt reasonable timeframes for specified activities related to an election it holds after the November 4, 2025, statewide special election, but before the end of the year.

Specifically this bill:

- 1) Makes a clarifying technical change to allow for the allocation schedule to be provided directly to the State Controller, to remit payments to counties to administer the November 4, 2025 Special Election.
- 2) Provides that notwithstanding specified provisions of the Elections Code, results from any regular or special local election called on or before August 8, 2025, and held on November 4, 2025, shall not be certified until at least 28 days after the election. Aligns the deadline for voters to resolve issues with vote by mail (VBM) ballots in these local elections with the deadline for the statewide special election.
- 3) Authorizes Santa Clara County to establish reasonable timelines for its elections official to carry out duties related to any election held in the county after November 4, 2025, and before December 31, 2025, as needed to comply with state certification requirements for the November 4, 2025, statewide special election.

**COMMENTS**

SB 280 (Cervantes), Chapter 97, Statutes of 2025, called a statewide special election for November 4, 2025. Local jurisdictions in several counties already had local elections scheduled for that same date. In some counties, voters will receive two separate ballots for elections held on November 4, one for local contests and one for the statewide measure. These elections may have different certification deadlines, which could create administrative challenges for county elections officials and confuse voters - especially relating to deadlines to resolve issues with VBM ballots. Accordingly, this bill aligns the deadlines for local elections held on November 4, 2025, with those for the statewide special election.

One such local election is a countywide special election in Santa Clara County to fill a vacancy in the office of County Assessor. Under the county's charter, if no candidate receives a majority of the votes on November 4, a runoff between the top two candidates must be held within 56 days. As a result, a runoff is scheduled for December 30, 2025, if needed.

Given the short timeline following certification of the statewide election pursuant to SB 280, Santa Clara County may need to modify deadlines for preparing and mailing materials for the runoff. This bill authorizes the county to adjust those timelines by resolution to ensure compliance with both the county charter and state law.

**According to the Author****Arguments in Support**

None on file.

**Arguments in Opposition**

None on file.

**FISCAL COMMENTS**

The bill would require the appropriation of \$100,000 from the General Fund to the Secretary of State for the 2025-205 fiscal year for the purposes of developing the report on the final cost of the November 4, 2025, statewide special election, thereby making an appropriation.

**VOTES****SENATE FLOOR: 28-10-2**

**YES:** Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

**NO:** Alvarado-Gil, Choi, Dahle, Grove, Jones, Niello, Ochoa Bogh, Seyarto, Strickland, Valladares

**ABS, ABST OR NV:** Reyes, Stern

**UPDATED**

VERSION: September 8, 2025

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FN: 0002025